

## Message Text

SECRET

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53

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-14 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 ACDA-19 OMB-01 EUR-25 DRC-01 /145 W

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O R 191415Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5479

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T JIDDA 5120

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XF, SA, PFOR

SUBJECT: SAQQAF APPREHENSIVE ABOUT COMING SUMMIT

1. MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OMAR  
SAQQAF TOLD ME NOV 19 THAT HAVING COMPLETED A  
10-DAY TOUR OF ARAB CAPITALS INCLUDING DAMASCUS,  
CAIRO, ALGIERS, TUNIS AND RABAT, HE FELT SOME  
DISQUIET AT PROSPECTS OF ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE  
SCHEDULED FOR NOV 26. IN DAMASCUS HE HAD FOUND  
MOOD OF GOVERNMENT TO BE EXTREMELY REALISTIC BUT  
ALSO VERY SELF-CONFIDENT. SYRIANS WERE UNCUSTOMARILY  
BLAMING NO FACTION OR "HIDDEN INFLUENCE" FOR REVERSES  
SUFFERED DURING OCTOBER WAR; AT SAME TIME PEOPLE  
AND ARMY OBVIOUSLY PROUD THAT THEY HAD DONE BETTER  
THAN EVER BEFORE AND SEEMED QUITE PREPARED TO FACE  
CONSEQUENCES OF RENEWED HOSTILITIES. IN EGYPT ALSO  
THERE WERE THOSE WHO FELT CEASEFIRE REPRESENTED

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UNNECESSARY CONCESSION TO ISRAEL, AND WERE PREPARED

TO ACCEPT NEW ROUND OF FIGHTING IF PROSPECTS FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION WERE NOT QUICKLY FORTHCOMING. IN SUCH FIGHTING, AN ISRAELI CITY WOULD CERTAINLY BE BOMED FOR EVERY ARAB ONE HIT.

2. SAQQAF EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN WITH PUGNACIOUS SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN ATTITUDES, EXPLAINING THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE EITHER COUNTRY HAD BEEN REARMED TO THE LEVELS OF STRENGTH ACHIEVED BY ISRAEL, THANKS TO MASSIVE U.S. AIRLIFT. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THESE ATTITUDES COULD NOT BE DISCOUNTED, AND HE FEARED THAT EVENTS IN MIDDLE EAST MIGHT NOT STAY THEIR HAND WHILE ISRAELIS WENT ABOUT ELECTING NEW GOVERNMENT AT THE END OF DECEMBER.

3. SPECIFICALLY, SAQQAF WORRIED THAT ARAB MOOD AT SUMMIT CONFERENCE WOULD BE A BULLISH, AGGRESSIVE ONE, AND THAT ARAB POSITIONS STRUCK THERE MIGHT SET BACK MOVES TOWARD A PEACE SETTLEMENT. (ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCE, HE BELIEVED, WOULD BE WELL NIGH UNIVERSAL, WITH ONLY QADDAFI LIKELY TO BE ABSENT; EVEN IRAQIS, HE SAID, MIGHT WELL ATTEND.) ACCORDINGLY, SAQQAF SUGGESTED FOR SECRETARY'S CONSIDERATION THAT USG MAKE SOME STATEMENT IN ADVANCE OF CONFERENCE THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN HAND OF MODERATES SUCH AS SAG, TUNIS AND MOROCCO. IF U.S. FOR INSTANCE COULD AFFIRM NECESSITY THAT ISRAELIS ABIDE BY OCT 22 CEASEFIRE LINES (OR MOVE ISRAELIS IN THAT DIRECTION), IT MIGHT SERVE AS A HELPFUL EARNEST OF AMERICAN INTENTIONS.

4. I SAID TIME QUITE SHORT AND THAT BOTH EGYPTIANS AND ISRAELIS SEEMED TO BE WORKING OUT TERMS OF CEASEFIRE IN A SATISFACTORY MANNER BETWEEN THEMSELVES. I BELIEVED HOWEVER WE SHOULD NOTE WITH CARE SAYYID OMAR'S PSYCHOLOGICAL READING OF MOOD IN ARAB CAPITALS, AND WOULD TRANSMIT HIS VIEWS PROMPTLY TO WASHINGTON.  
AKINS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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